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and functions to agents who acted for him. Now he gets a certain percentage of the total revenue collected in the village in lieu of the rent-free land. Thus, theoretically, the Deshmukh is both Mali Patel and Police Patel; but in actual practice these duties are carried out by his agents. In his capacity as Mali Patel of the village the Deshmukh takes steps to ensure the speedy collection of land revenue after each harvest and remits it to the district treasury. The Patwari can seek his assistance in matters connected with the land records and revenue of the village. For this he gets annually 5% of the total land revenue collected in the village. As Police Patel the Deshmukh is entitled to receive another 5% of the revenue collected during the year. In this capacity he has to send regular reports to the police regarding the occurrence of any crime in the village, keep an eye on the 'bad characters' and watch the activities of suspicious strangers. He maintains records of births and deaths in the village. It is his duty to assist the police in all possible ways in their investigations regarding criminal offences in the village. The other officials, such as the sub-inspector of police, head constables, constables and schoolmasters, are not a permanent part of the local population, and as such they do not generally get mixed up in local politics and other affairs. The police officials enjoy both prestige and power and are, in general, greatly feared by the people.

The Patwari, in spite of the fact that he is a petty revenue and land records official, occupies a pivotal position in the village and plays a very significant part in local politics. Being in charge of the land records, he can manipulate things both to the advantage and disadvantage of landowners, who often consult him and ask his advice. Of Patwaris in general it is said, 'What will they not do for a consideration? Give them money and they will prove their own father a bastard.' The present Patwari of Shamirpet is, for one in his position, a man of more than average intelligence and is himself a careful and substantial cultivator who owns some 247 acres of land jointly with his brother. He receives no salary from the government, nor does he have any rent-free land, but a certain percentage of the total land revenue is fixed by the government as his remuneration for the work.

All villages in Hyderabad State, as do most of those of middle and peninsular India, have a number of village menials. Their functions in the internal organization of the village are of two

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well as the village cults still continue to retain their former position.

The Police Action undertaken by the Indian Union in 1948 changed the fortune and status of the State of Hyderabad. The most significant outcome was that political power changed hands —from an extremist communal party to the people of the State. It had a profound effect on the rural areas. However, sufficient time must elapse before we can evaluate its total influence on the life of the community. But it has set in motion certain trends which are not without interest to the student of social change in peasant communities.

The first definite change is that Muslims who occupied a privileged position during the former régime now no longer do so. On account of some of their un-neighbourly acts of terrorism during the last phase of extremist Muslim rule in the State some of them had become very unpopular. Fearing retaliation by the Hindus they ran away from the village temporarily. Now they have all returned. For some time they were jeered at and ridiculed, but at the time of our study cordiality had returned to the Hindu and Muslim sections of the population.

The second noticeable change is that under the administrative reforms initiated by the new administration forced labour and forced extraction of hospitality by government officials have been prohibited. In practice they still continue on a restricted scale. Government's decision to take determined steps against bribery and corruption has been announced; but firm action still remains to be taken in this direction.

Thirdly, the abolition of feudal estates has been a big step in the direction of land reform. With the end of the Jagirdari system Shamirpet has once again come under normal district administration. Further reforms ensuring a more equitable distribution of land, fixing a maximum limit on land holding and ending the evils of absentee landlordism are under contemplation. When these plans materialize substantial changes can be expected.

Fourthly, the government has intensified its welfare and nation-building activities. The village is to have a better school in the near future. The Public Health Department is already more active. The Agriculture and Veterinary departments are making a better planned and organized effort towards the introduction

of more scientific methods in their respective fields. But the results of these efforts can be judged only after a few years.

Re. 0-4-0 per Rs. 100 capital value in spite of these Boards being manned by highly educated and respected persons. Same was the case in Kistna, Vizagapatam and the Ceded Districts. In Vizagapatam even the biggest Panchayats refused to levy more than Re. 0-4-0 per Rs. 100 capital value of the house. In stray instances like Madugula, the highest rate of house tax was Re. 0-8-0 per Rs. 100 capital value. In Kurnool, the house tax of Panchayats usually ranged between Re. 0-2-0 and Re. 0-3-0 per Rs. 100 capital value. In Bellary, it was 1/6 per cent the capital value. Some other Panchayats in the Ceded Districts were also found to be following a method of collecting an additional water and privy rate along with the house tax as in Dhone and Maddikera Panchayats in Kurnool, where 45% of the house tax was collected towards supply of protected water supply and drainage. 651

The tendency in most of the major Panchayats was either to pay the lowest rate possible and to pay the lowest possible amount by all conceivable means like undervaluation of the capital value of houses, under assessment of certain houses by all possible discrimination and exemptions of the houses of those who were dear and near to the members. If the executive officers came in the way of such undesirable practices, Panchayat members sought to get them transferred on some false pretext or harassed them in every way. 661

In the minor Panchayats, as imposition of house tax was optional, very few imposed any house tax at all. According to the provisions of the Madras Local Boards Act of 1930, if a Panchayat did not impose house tax prior to 1930, it need not impose it even after 1930. This gave the minor Panchayats an excuse to bypass this obligation. Except a few Panchayats like Kothapeta and Palivela among the minor Panchayats in East Godavari, which collected house tax at the rate of Re. 0-4-0 and Re. 0-2-0 respectively per Rs. 100 capital value of the house, most of the other minor Panchayats like Yaditha, Alamuru, Kapileswarapuram and a host of others were leaving this source of income totally untapped. In West Godavari, it was almost non-existent, while there were stray instances of house tax collection in the minor Panchayats in Kistna, Vizagapatam, Kurnool, Anantpur, etc. districts. In Kistna, Gudur Panchayat collected at the rate of 1/3% capital value of the house. In Vizagapatam, the majority of those like Bhogapuram, Govada, Chodavada, Bayyavaram did not impose any house tax and only Kothavalasa appeared to be collecting house tax at the following rates :— 651

Thus while most of the major Panchayats did not collect at the highest rates possible, but struggled to devise ways and means of either escaping it or levying it at the lowest rates possible, the majority of the minor Panchayats evaded it altogether. 651 661

Scavenging Fees: Public health and conservancy were the obligatory duties of the Panchayats. They provided public latrines for males and females in almost all the major Panchayats, and got them cleansed by the Panchayat scavengers. They also extended their service to private latrines and charged the house-holders at particular rates except in cases of Panchayats where scavengers were independent of Panchayats as in Vizagapatam District. (column 5.) 614 651

This amenity was provided mostly by major Panchayats, while the minor Panchayats lagged behind. But the fees that were being collected by Panchayats varied from one to the other in several respects, such as the base, the rate, the period for which they were collected, and the institutional discrimination they showed.

There was no uniformity in the rates of scavanging fees collected in several Panchayats. But the fees collected varied from Panchayat to Panchayat of the same and different grades in each and every district. Again the fixation of rate was not based on any rational basis, except according to the fancy of the individual Panchayat Board concerned. Sometimes the fees were charged per latrine, sometimes on the number of members in the family, sometimes according to an arbitrary distinction of big and small families, in some instances the rates were per mensem, and in others they were charged on a quarterly basis. Some Panchayats distinguished between different categories of institutions like office, police lines, schools, union areas and private families and charged separate rates for separate institutions. In some cases the scavenging rates were made a part of the assessment on house tax as in the Ceded Districts.

In the Ceded Districts of Anantpur and Kurnool, scavenging fees were also collected on the basis of rates of house tax: as Re. 1, Rs. 1-8-0 and Rs. 2 per quarter per latrine. In Bellary, the Kampli Panchayat collected only Re. 0-3-0 per latrine, while Rayadrug had arranged a regular scale related with the capital valuation of the house at Re. 0-6-0, Re. 0-12-0 and Re. 1 per quarter per latrine, according to the capital value of the house Rs. 800, Rs. 800 to Rs. 3000, and Rs. 3000 and over respectively. In West Godavari, the basis of collection was still different in the 3rd grade Panchayats as in Ganapavaram and Undi. In Ganapavaram, the rates

623 Panchayat would not work under any circumstances. Ultimately it
578 was superseded.

697 In Kistna District there was a parallel instance. In one Panchayat three Presidents came in power in quick succession. When the President who was in office for 4 year resigned the Vice-President became the President. But he was thrown out and anotner was elected and during his term of office, the Panchayat was superseded. The cause of conflict was strong party factions. The difficulty was only one party in the village was returned into power while the other parties remained outside. So the members within the Panchayat tried to wreck it and ultimately the Board was superseded.

In Vizagapatam one Panchayat met on its own accord and began to cancel a resolution which it had passed permitting taxation on sugar pans, etc. Immediately when it was detected, the Board was superseded and a special officer was appointed, under whom the financial position had considerably improved.

Anantapur District had similar instances of Panchayats which were opposed to taxation, full of party factions, negligent in work and highly litigious. In one instance, the President of the Ex-Taluk Board was a member of the Panchayat and he was in the minority party. In the contest for the Presidential election for the Panchayat, the man from the majority party became successful. As the minority party wanted to pull down the party in power, they refused to pass the administration report, turned petromax lights to kerosene oil lights in the name of the public good and opposed vehemently any taxation The machine of the water pump system was spoiled. So the Inspector of Local Boards requested the Panchayat to add a surcharge of 12% to the house tax and provide themselves with this badly needed facility for which Government and District
687 Board gave donations. Yet the Board persisted in opposing for six
661 months postponing meetings for want of quorum, when it was finally superseded. Another minor Panchayat in Anantapur was superseded because the President and members under-assessed their houses and those of their relations.

These were instances of Panchayats getting annually an income of Rs. 200,000 where the engineer drew a much higher salary than the executive officer, but technically was a sub-ordinate to him.

623 The special officer who was put in charge was expected to bring about a uniform development in the administration of the Panchayat. He had powers to enforce fresh taxation, collect arrears and execute

661 653 Even the major Panchayats with overseers and mistries, either left the budgeted plans unfinished, neglecting the roads on the plea that plans were not approved by the District Board or executed them in a haphazard piecemeal way by reducing all the estimates to an amount below Rs. 250/- which they could undertake. Some Panchayat budgets showed expenditure on roads, which were never laid but when caught, sought to plead that they were spoiled by the time the inspecting authority could visit them. There were frauds in preparing the estimates, in the execution of contracts and in the accounts of the amounts shown as paid in the Panchayat budgets. These shady deals go unpunished for want of positive proof. Minor Panchayats portrayed better enthusiasm in the execution of their public works by the use of communal labour. However, to avoid much wastage of public money by the Panchayats more competent, honest and sincere supervising staff to look to their estimates and execution is essential. Corruption, delay and dilatory tactics should seriously be dealt with. Starting of Government Central Depots for storing and selling raw materials like lime, stone, tar, keel and other materials required for public works under Local Boards would mitigate to some extent the present evil of embezzlements of public funds. A close laison between the District Board and the Public Works Department to tighten up the supervision may also improve the position.

312 Though there is no acute water scarcity in the Circars as in the Ceded Districts there is need for providing protected water supply in Panchayats where there are no fresh water wells or to dig more wells where they are inadequate. While the Panchayats have not got resources to undertake this task, the District Boards and the State Government should take more interest.

744 364 Only some major Panchayats appointed sanitary inspectors, vaccinators, mid-wives and compounders to look after public health, scavengers and thotties to clean the roads, drains, gutters and latrines private and public. The sanitary inspectors looked to the enforcement of the Food Adulteration Act, supervision of the slaughter houses, prevention of infectious diseases, maintenance of the public health, sweeping of the roads, etc. with the assistance of the sanitary staff. But many Panchayats were not in a position to undertake most of these functions due to the lack of funds or difficulties in recruiting scavengers and thotties as in the case of Vizagapatam due to the low salaries paid.

231 Slaughter houses were found mostly in the minor and major Panchayats where even the right of collecting the receipts was